LXXVI.

MEMOIRS

OF

LITERATURE.

MONDAY, August 27. 1711.

Dialogues Satyriques sur differens Sujets, par BONAVENTURE DES PERRIERS, Valet de Chambre de Marguerite de Valois, Reine de Navarre. Avec une Lettre Critique, dans laquelle on fait l'Histoire, l'Analyse, & l'Apologie de cet Ouvrage, par PROSPER MARCHAND, Libraire. A Amsterdam, chez Prosper Marchand, Libraire, dans le Nes, à l'Enseigne de l'Etoile. MDCCXI.

That is, CYMBALUM MUNDI, Or Satyrical Dialogues upon several Subjects; by BONAVENTURE DESPERRIERS, Valet de Chambre to Margaret de Valois, Queen of Navarre. To which is added, A Critical Letter, written by PROSPER MARCHAND, Bookseller; wherein he gives the History, and a short Account of that Book, and makes an Apology for it. Amsterdam, printed for Prosper Marchand, Bookseller in the Nes, at the Sign of the Star. 1711. in 120. pagg. 144.

HE Cymbalum Mundi of Bonaventure des Perriers
was grown so scarce, that Mr. Marchand informs
us; that he knows but Two Copies of it at

Paris; one of which is lodged in the King's Library, and the other happen'd to be among the Books of Messieurs Bigot of Rouen, that were fold at Paris in 1706. The latter, being bound up with feveral other Pieces, was not mention'd in the Catalogue of that Library made by M. Marchand, because he overlook'd it. The Person who bought that Volume, finding the Cymbalum Mundi in it, was fo well pleas'd with his Discovery, and made so great a Noise about it, that he revived the Curiosity of several Gentlemen, who desir'd to have it transcrib'd from his Copy. M. Marchand was one of those who had a mind to read that Book. The Copy belonging to the King's Library was lent him by a Friend, who had been entrusted with it; and when he had read it, he was extremely furprifed that the Cymbalum Mundi should have been accounted one of the most pernicious Books, that ever was publish'd, and that most of those who mention it, should call it an Impious and Atheistical Piece. Which gave him Occasion to write the Critical Letter, prefixed to this new Edition, wherein he undertakes to justify that Book. M. Marchand having got a Transcript of the Printed Copy in the King of France's Library, thought fit to pub-lish a new Edition of it, tho' he believes 'tisa Work more famous than valuable, wherein I am very much of his mind. There are several Curious Passages in M. Marchand's Letter, of which I shall take notice, when I have given an Account of the Cymbalum Mundi.

That Book confifts of Four Dialogues, to which Bongventure des Periers prefixed a Letter to a Friend, whom he calls Peter Tryocun, and concealed himself under another fictitious Name, viz. that of Thomas du Clevier. That Letter is a little mysterious. Des Perriers tells his Friend, that he promis'd him Eight Years before to translate into French a small Latin Piece, entitled Cymbalum Mundi, which he had found in an Old Library of a Monastery near the City of Dabas, (another fictitious Name.) He adds, That he has performed his Promise; That he did not think fit to confine himfelf to his Original in a fervile manner; That he has taken some Latitude in his Translation, and adapted it to the Genius of the French Language, to render it more intelligible, and more acceptable to his Friend. Lastly, He desires his Friend not to give any Copy of it, lest it should come into the Hands of some Bookseller, who would not fail to pub-

I I proceed to the Four Dialogues. In the First, Mercury comes down from Heaven to Athens, to get a Book bound up for Jupiter; and mentions several Commissions which he had received from Venus, June, and Minierus. He complains that he is in a great Hurry; and G g g g

This new Edition has been printed from that of Lyone, 1538. in 8vo. the Title of which runs thus: CTM-BALUM MUNDI, en Francoys, contenant quatre Dialogues Poetiques, fort Antiques, Joyeux & Facetieux. MDXXXVIII. The following Lines are to be found at the End of the Book. Fin du present Livre intitule Cymbalum Mundi, en Francoys, imprime nouvellement à Lyon par Benoist Bonyn, Imprimeur, demourant au dit lieu, en la rue de Paradis. MDXXXVIII.

ays, among other Things, that he must carry to Charon Eight Infants stifled by the Vestals, and Five Druids, who are dead of Madness. Two Men, (Byrphanes and Gartalisu), standing by a Tavern, perceive him. Mercury, whom they pretend not to know, comes to them, and asks them whether there is any good Wine to be had in that Tavern? They tell him, there is none better in Town. Whilft the Drawer fetches the Wine , Mercury goes up stairs, to steal something. In the mean time, Byrphanes and Curtalius resolve to rob him; and say, it will be a Glorious Thing for them to rob the God of Theft. They untie his Bag, and take out an old rotten Book, and put another in its room; which, fays Byrphanes, is little better than the other, there being no great Difference between them. The Book that was in Mercury's Bag, happen'd to be the Book of Destinies, as it appear'd from this Title.

* Quæ in hoc libro continentur:
Chronica rerum memorabilium, quas
JUPITER gessit antequam esset ipse.
Fatorum præscriptum: sive, eorum quæ
futura funt, certæ dispositiones,
Catalogus Heroum Immortalium, qui
cum JOVE vitam victuri sunt sempiternam.

Mercury, having stollen a little Silver-Image, returns to Byrphanes and Curtalius, and drinks with them: And because he says the Wine is as good as Jupiter's Nectar, they call him a Blasphemer. To justify himself, he adds, that he has tafted both. These Words provoke them to the highest degree. I never drank any Nectar, fays Curtalius; but I believe what is written and faid of it. You ought not to compare any Wine that grows here, with Jupiter's Ne-Bar. Whereupon they turn him out of the Room, and threaten to get him arrested for his Words, and for stealing some Thing in the House. Mercury, being afraid of an ill Treatment, goes away Curfing the Hour when his Father Jupiter order'd him to converse among Men. He pays the Hostes; and being well pleas'd with her, promifes her that Fifty Years will be added to her Life, befides those appointed by the Destinies. The Hostes says The cannot believe it, because the is fure such a thing cannot be. Do you laugh at it, replies Mercury? Well! You shall not live to long: You will be a Slave all the Time of your Life, and Sick every Month, to far as to evacuate Blood. What I told you, will not happen, fince you will not believe it. Mercury, being fenfibly touched with the Affront put upon him by Byrphanes and Curtalius, declares that if eyer they fall into his Hands, he will defire Charon to make them flay Three Thousand Years upon the Banks of Acheren; and besides, that he will blot out their Names out of Jupiter's Book. The Two Athenians appear very well pleased with their Theft; but feem to be apprehensive, that when Jupiter comes to hear of it, he will destroy all Mankind, to punish so great a Crime.

II. The Second Dialogue is a Satyr upon those who seek the X Philosophers-Stone. Trigabus, one of the Interlocutors, tells Mercury, that tho' he be the Son of Jupiter, he has horribly cheated the Philosophers. You told them, says he, that you had the Philosophers Stone; You broke it into small Pieces, and threw them into the Sand of the Amphitheater; You made them believe, that if they could recover any Part of it, tho' never so small, they would perform wonderful Things, change one Metal into another, break open the Doors that are not shut, cure those that are not sick, understand the Language of Birds, obtain from the Gods any thing that will infallibly happen; such as Rain after Fine Weather, Flowers and Dew in the Spring, Heat and Dust in the Summer, Fruit in the Autumn, cold and dirty Weather in the Winter;

in short, that they would be able to do any thing. They have been very busy ever since, in stirring the Sand of the Amphitheater, in hopes of finding some Particles of the Philosophers-Stone.

Well, says Mercury, have none of them found any? None, replies Trigabus: But all of them pretend to have a great Quantity of those Particles, insomuch that if they were all put together, they would make a Bulk ten times

larger than the whole Stone.

Perhaps, fays Mercery, they have pick'd up Sandy Particles : 'Tis an eafy Mistake ; for there is no great Difference between Sand and the Philosophers-Stone. I cannot tell, fays Trigabus; but I have feen many, who were very positive that they had found several Particles, and then quickly doubted of it, and at last threw them away, to look for others When they had gathered new ones, they could not be fure they were not miftaken. I protest I never had better Sport. You have cut out a great deal of Work for those filly Fellows. I wish you knew every thing; how they quarrel; how they fight together about it. Some boaft that they have got more Particles of the Philosophers-Stone than others: But others fay they are mere Sand. One pretends to shew how they may be found: The other answers, he knows it as well and better than he. Some fay, that in order to find true Particles of that Stone, one must be drefs'd in Red and Green : Others will have it, that Yellow and Blue are more proper. Some are of Opinion that a certain Sort of Diet is necessary: O. thers fay, 'tis not proper to lye with Women. Some affirm, that Candles ought to be used, even at Noon-day: Others peremptorily deny it. They cry out, and abuse one another; and God knows how many criminal Cafes are occasion'd by it. You shall hear nothing but Quarrels and Difputes of this Nature in every Street, Temple, Mill, Brothel, &c. Nay, some of those Men are to felfconceited, and so fully persuaded of having a true Portion of the Philosophers Stone, that they pretend to judge of every Thing, of Heaven, and the Elysian Fields; of Vice and Virtue; of Life and Death, Oc. 'Tis thought, some have found several Pieces of the Stone: But it does not appear that they have any Virtue, besides that of changing Men into chirping Birds, abusive Parrots, and Alles that will bear any Burthen. In thort, Mercury, you never faw any thing more Comical,

Whereupon Trigabus invites Mercury to go to the Amphitheater, where he will have a great deal of Sport- Mercury assumes the Figure of an Old Man, that none of the Philosophers may know him, and follows Trigabus. When they come to the Amphitheater, Rhetulus *, one of the Philosophers, speaks these Words: Gentlemen, 'Tis in vain for you to look : I have hit the Bird on the Eye. My Friend, fays Cubercus, (another Philosopher), don't boaft fo much : The Philosophers-Stone is of fuch a Nature, that it lofes its Virtue, when a Man prefumes too much upon himself, after he has found some Particles of it. I will not deny that you have some; but suffer others to be as happy as you are. Mercury, who made us that Pretent, will not have us to quarrel about it, but to love one another like Brethren; and yet we do the contrary. Notwithstanding such a wife Admonition , Rhetulus , a hot Man, maintains still that the other Philosophers have gathered nothing but Sand Drarig, a pert and bold Philosopher, gives him the Lie, and shews him a true Piece of the Stone. Rhetulus throws it away; Drarig provoked with the Affront, flies into a violent Passion

against him.

In the remaining Part of this Dialogue, which is the most Curious of the Four, Mercury and Trigabus banter the Philosophers about their vain Enquiry. Rhetulus, one of the most Zealous for the Philosophers Stone, boasts of performing great Wonders with what he has of it. I transform, says he, the Opinions of Men, and bring them into a new Way of Living. I make them lie with Vestals, whereas before they durst not look upon them. I can persuade those, who dress'd themselves after the Bohemian Fashion, to appear in a Turkish dress, Ge. Besides, I am talk'd of all over Greece; and many People will maintain

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^{*} That is, This Book contains a Chronicle of the Memorable Things, which Jupiter did before he had a Being: The Decrees of Fate, or a Certain and Infallible Disposition of Things to come: And a Catalogue of the Immortal Heroes, who are to live for ever with Jupiter.

^{*} Let the Readers judge, whether Bonaventure des Periers meant something else than the Philosophers-Scone.

^{*} Some will have it to be the Anagram of Lu-

rill death, that I have a great deal of the true Philosophers-Stone. At last Mercury and Trigabus, having laugh'd at the great Credulity of the Philosophers, leave them in quest of their chimerical Treasure.

III. In the Third Dialogue, Mercury, perceiving that the Book of Destinies has been stol'n from him, comes down again from Heaven to have it cried at Athens. He wonders that Jupiter does not destroy Mankind with his Thunder-bolt to punish fuch a Crime, fince their Guilt was not so great, when he over-flowed the World in the time of Lycaon; for, fays he, the Mortals not contented to fleal his Book, have also, in Contempt of his Majesty, put another in the Room of it, containing the History of his Amorous Adventures, and of all his Youthful Tricks. In the next Place, he mentions the Commissions he has received from feveral Goddesses, and meeting Cupid, talks with him, and asks him whether he has heard any thing of Jupiter's Book. Cupid informs him, that it is in the Hands of Two Fellows, who are turned by that means Fortune-tellers, and foretell Things to come as well as Tirelias. Afterwards Mercury, wanting some News for the Gods, works a Miracle, and makes a Horse speak: That Horse upbraids his Master, in the Presence of many People, with his hard Usage, and Avarice, and several other Faults.

IV. The Fourth Dialogue runs between two Dogs. Those Dogs did formerly belong to Asteon; and having eat up his Tongue, when he was metamorphosed into a Stag by Diana, got by it the Faculty of Speaking. They discourse of several Things, and particularly of the soolish Curiosity of Men for every thing that is new and wonderful

These Four Dialogues made so great a Noise in the XVIth Century, and are so little known, that I thought all the curious Readers would expect from me that I should give a particular Account of them. They are well written, confidering the time when the Author lived, and interspersed with several ingenious Satyrical Strokes. La Croix du Maine fays in his Bibliotheque Francoife, pag. 37. that the Cymbalum Mundi was printed at Paris in the Year 1537. which is confirmed by a Petition presented to the Chancellor by John Morin , a Paris-Bookseller , who was imprisoned for printing that Book. That Petition is to be found, written, as 'tis faid, with M. du Puis's own hand, at the end of the Copy lodged in the King of France's Library. 'Tis therefore certain that the Cymbalum Mundi was suppress'd, assoon as it came out, as a pernicious Book; nor is it less certain that several Authors, quoted by M. Marchand, look upon it as an impious Work. I grant that this Book appears very Innocent, if it be literally understood, and if we suppose that the Author did only defign to ridicule Paganism, the Philosophers-Stone, Oc. But fince it was suppress'd, and so much cried down, 'tis a fign it was generally believed that Bonaventure des Perriers had an ill Defign, and attack'd Religion under pretence of writing against the false Deities of the Heathens, &c. M. Marchand says tis a groundless Suspicion, and alledges several Reasons to justify the Author: He maintains that it cannot be proved from his Book, that he was an impious Man. The Author of the Advertisement prefixed to the new Edition of the Tales and pleafant Stories of des Penriers is not of M. Marchand's Opinion. The Delign of Bonoventure des Perriers , in his Cymbalum Mundi, appears to him equivocal. To what purpose, says he, should that Author have undertaken to expose and ridicule Paganism, when there was no Occasion for it? And then he makes the following Observations. Perhaps some will think, that the Ironical Title of the Book of Destinies, Chronica rerum memorabilium, quas Jupiter gessit antequam effet ipse, &c. is very suspicious. The stealing of that Book (will they say) might be a Raillery injurious to the Deity, and a malicious Infinuation that Men can penetrate as far as God. The Philosophers-Scone, ridiculed in the Second Dialogue, feems to be Truth. Des Perriers undertakes to expose the Philosophers (perhaps the Catholick Divines and the Reformers of his Time,) for their Search after Truth, and to destroy Truth it felf, as a chimerical Thing. That Dialogue may be more naturally applied to Truth, than to the Art of transmuting Metals. If it be fo, (continues that Author,) there was Moderig : And Sold by M. Malo min, near the

a Necessity to vindicate those Passages, that are most suspicious. A mere Negative is not sufficient to justify a Book, that has been so much cried down.

Some other Observations upon the Cymbalum Mundi written by feveral Hands, have been interted at the end of the new Edition of der Perrier's Tales. Upon thele Words, Eight Infants stifled by she Vestals, one of those Authors observes, that 'tis a Satyrical Stroke against the Nuns. He pretends that by the Druids, des Perriers meant fome Doctors of the Serbenne or other Clergymen; that Truth is attack'd in the Second Dialogue under the Notion of the Philosophers-Stone; that the Divine Author of the Christian Truths is brought in under the Name of Mercury; that the Celibacy of Ecclefiafticks is hinted at in these Words, Others Say 'tis not proper to lie with Women ; that Rhetulus is the Anagram of Lutherus , &c. The last Observation is expressed in these Words. "'Tis not improbable that " those Four Dialogues are only a rough Draught of the "Author's Defign; and that if he had lived longer, he would " have explained himself more clearly. The words Cymbalum Mundi, prefixed to the Book, are fufficient to shew " that the Design of that Writer was to ridicule the Opinions of Men, and to prove that what is generally believed is not more folid than the Sound of a Bell, or of "the Instrument call'd Cymbalum. In order to establish that pernicious System, he was to reflect upon God and his Providence, which he endeavours to do in the First and Third Dialogues. In the next Place, there was a Necessity to destroy Truth; which is the Design of the Second Dialogue. Lastly, he centures the great Curiofity of Men for new and wonderful Things. Such is the Scope of the Fourth Dialogue, which, in my Opi-" nion, would not have been the last, if des Perriers had " lived long enough to finish his System".

It seems to me that Bonaventure des Perriers had an ill Defign *, and I shall give several Reasons for it, without pretending that they are demonstrative Arguments. 1. I believe, as Mr. Marchand does, that the Cymbalum Mundi was originally written in French. If it be fo, why does the Author appear so mysterious in his Letter to his Friend? Why does he pretend that his Book is a Translation from the Latin, if he did only defign to ridicule Paganism? One might infer from thence, that being afraid the Readers would quickly perceive the Venom conceals ed under his Allegories, he took fuch a Precaution the better to prevent his being discovered. 2. Any one who reads those Dialogues with Attention, will easily observe feveral Passages, that may raise some Suspicion. 3. The Third Dialogue may be look'd upon as a Satyr upon Truth, without doing any Violence to the Words of the Author: Nay, there are feveral Things in that Dialogue, as it appears from my Extract, that can hardly agree with the Philosophers-Stone. 4. The Suppression of the Cymbslum Mundi, affoon as it came out, feems to prove that it was then look'd upon as a pernicious Book; and 'tis not improbable that the ill Defign of the Author was then better known than it is now. 5. Accordingly feveral Authors of the XVIth Century, who were better informed of feveral Circumstances relating to the Author and his Book, than we are now, call the Cymbalum Mundi a detestable and impious Work. If it be true, that Bongventure des Perriers had an ill Delign in publishing that Book, there was no need of reprinting it. However, it will do no manner of Harm : 'Tis but an indifferent Performance, like all other Books publish'd with the fame Intent.

I shall conclude with a Curious Observation of M. Marchand Voesius (in the IId Volume of his Disputationes felesta, pag. 199. Disputatione de Atheismo) quotes a Passage of Father Mersenne out of his Quastiones in Genesius, pag. 669. wherein that Author calls Bonaventure des Perriers a Monster, and a most impious Knave; and adds, that several Persans maintain that he was an Atheist, who lived a very impious Life, and died miserably: And then speaking of the Cymhalum Mundi, he says, That Book consists of IV Dialogues, and contains several Father about Jupiter, Mercury, &c.; whereby he seems to deride the Catholick Faith, and to reject what we say and believe concerning God. M. Marchand informs us, that this Passage, and every thing

Oxford-Arms III Warnick-Lane.

else that Father Mersenne said of the Cymbalum Mundi, is not to be found in most Copies of his Book. These words, Cymbalum Mundi, Athei Bonaventura Cymbalum Mundi, are indeed to be seen in the Index under the Letters C and A, with a Reference to the Column 669. But 'tis a salse Reference: There is no such thing there, nor in the subsequent Columns.

M. Marchand having perused to no Purpose many Copies of that Book, and even that of the Library of the Minimes at Paris, which he thought would be more exact than others, found out at last that Two new Leaves have been inserted in that Place. Father Mersenne had given an Account of the Atheists of his Time, and of their Works and Opinions in that Part of his Book, Which plainly appears from these Words in the

Index: Athei plurimi enumerantur. 670, 671. Athei in Gallia, Germania, Scotia, Polonia, &c. 673. Atheorum dogmata horrenda. 673. and from several others, wherein the Readers are vainly referred to the Body of the Book. 'Tis highly probable, that when the Book came out, it was thought those Passages might be of a dangerous Confequence; and that Father Mersenne, in Obedience to his Superiors, inserted Two new Leaves in that Part of his Work, viz. from the 669th Column to the 676th inclusively. Voetius, who gives the Substance of Father Mersenne's Opinion, and even quotes some of his Words, made use of a Copy in which the new Leaves had not been inserted. Those, who have Spizelius's Scrutinium Atheismi, will find M. Marchand's Observation confirmed in an Advertisement at the End of that Book.

FLORENCE.

TAther Valsecchi, a Benedistin, has sent to the Press a Latin Dissertation concerning the Age of the Emperor Heliogabalus. That Dissertation contains several Remarks, whereby the Chronology of the Third Century is very much illustrated.

BRESCIA.

THE Condemnation of Joseph Beccarelli, for his Pernicious Opinions, has occasion'd the Stamping of a Medal in Honour of Cardinal Badoere, Bishop of this City. That Priest, who had many Friends, was tried and condemned by that Illustrious Prelate, and his Sentence was confirmed by the Court of Rome. The Trial began in 1707, and ended in 1710. Upon that Side of the Medal, on which the Head of the Cardinal appears, these Words are to be seen under the Head;

S. P. Q. B.

Ob Cives Servatos.

And about the Head,

Jo. Cardinalis Baduarius Episcopus Brixia *.

Upon the Reverse, there is a Place of Babylon very well engraved. Cyrus appears in the midst of a great Multitude. Daniel stands by him, and shews him the Dragon, which had been worshipp'd among the Babylonians for a long time, lying upon the Ground, and dying. The Surprize of the People is lively express'd. These Words are to be seen round that Side of the Medal;

Ecce quem colebatis. Daniel 14

BERLIN.

A Muscowite Monk has brought hither the Invention of an Engine, with which he pretends that the Stomach may be cleansed. It is a small Brush of Hair, like those that are made use of to clean Bottles. He lets down that Brush into the Stomach, with an Iron-wire fasten'd to it about a Foot and a half long, and cover'd with Silk; and when the Brush is in the Stomach, he moves it in the same manner as if it was in a Bottle, to clean it. Some Experiments have been made of it, with a good Success; but they are not many, for want of People that are willing to have it tried upon them.

* That is, The Senate and the People of Brescia, to John Badoere Cardinal Bishop of Brescia, for having saved his Citizens.

LEIPSICK.

THE Ecclesiastical History of the Second Century, written by the late M. Ittigius, is newly come out.

Historiæ Ecclesiasticæ Secundi a Christo nato Seculi selecta Capita, delineata studio D. Thomæ Ittigii, superint & Theol. Prof. in Ecclesia & Academia patria Lipsiensi Pramissa est ejusadem de Scriptoribus Historiæ Ecclesiasticæ antiquioribus Dissertatio. Lipsiæ. 1711. in 4to.

This Book is divided into Seven Chapters. The greatest Part of it was ready for the Press, when the Author died. Mr.L. Christian Ludovici has supplied what was wanting, viz. some Paragraphs of the VIth Chapter, and the whole Seventh Chapter. The Differtation prefixed to this Work, contains an Account of the Writers of Ecclesiastical History to the time of Luther.

ZERBST in the Principality of Anhalt.

THE History of the Principality of Anhalt, written by M. JohnChristopher Becman in the German Language, and lately printed in this Town, is very much esteemed. He has not forgot to mention an old Tradition, which is generally believed in this Country. That Tradition runs thus: A Princess used to shake every Day her Napkin out of the Window immediately after Dinner; and a large Toad conflantly received what fell from it. That Princess being with Child, saw one Night a Maid coming to her Bed with a Candle in her Hand, who having told her that the Toad was very thankful for the Care she took to feed it, gave her a Gold Ring, and let her know that it should be kept very carefully, because the Safety of Anhalt depended upon it. Belides the told her, that every Year upon Christmas-Eve great Care should be taken of the Fire, lest the House should be burnt that Night. Others fay the Ring was brought by another Woman. However it be, that Ring is not only kept at Deffau to this prefent time, but also great Care is taken on that Day to put out the Fire all over the Palace about the dusk of the Evening, and in the Rooms of the Princes at Eight a Clock, and feveral Watchmen go round all the Night to prevent a

LETDEN.

A N Author who calls himself Christianus Democritus, has lately publish'd the following Book.

Vità Animalis Morbus & Medicina, sua vindicata origini Disquissione Physico-Medica, qua simul Mechanismi & Spino-sismi deliramenta funditus deteguntur, & Mathematica evidentia ex sana rationis circulo deturbantur, & integrum universi motus Systema concinnis vinculus nectitur. Auctore Christiano Democrito M. D. Lugduni-Batavorum. 1711. in 120. pagg. 160.

LONDON: Printed by J. Roberts: And Sold by A. Baldwin, near the Oxford-Arms in Warwick-Lane. (Price 2 d.)